

*NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY*

*Examination of Ordination of Women as Church Ministers and
Leaders in East Africa Pentecostal Churches: A Case Study
of Tharaka North District*

*BY
ALBERT KATHENYA KAIBIRU*

*A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of
Arts in Christian Education*

JULY 2006

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Approved:

Supervisor: Suraja Raman
Dr. Suraja Raman

Second Reader: Winfred Ndumu
Dr. Winfred Ndumu

External Examiner: Mary Getui
Prof. Mary Getui

JULY 2006


Student's declaration

EXAMINATION OF ORDINATION OF WOMEN AS CHURCH MINISTERS
AND LEADERSHIP IN EAST AFRICA PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES:
A CASE STUDY OF THARAKA NORTH DISTRICT:

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other College
or University for academic credit.

The views presented herein are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical
Graduate School of Theology or of the Examiners.

Signed-----



Albert Kathenya Kaibiru

July, 2006

ABSTRACT

This study examines the perceptions held by leaders in EAPC on women ordination and leadership. A qualitative study and data collected using face to face open ended interviews that were recorded and transcribed.

The report reveals that, there is no known theological stand on the issue of women ordination. The church has not formulated any universal church doctrine that could be passed on to her members as an official church view. Much of what is being practiced is based on cultural inclinations and each chooses what to believe as a leader and passes it on in his area of jurisdiction.

To

All friends and EAPC church members country wide, that have the
desire to preach the holistic Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The East Africa Pentecost Church was founded by a Norwegian missionary Arnt Walter Olsen. This missionary visited Kenya in 1947 for the first time during the colonial era. He was accompanied by his wife Karly Fjell. He began evangelism work at the Coast of Kenya, Mombasa where he established the first assembly 1953. In 1961, the missionary found his way to Meru region where he took intensive preaching and teaching of the word of God. Olsen, the founding missionary at around this same time went down to Tharaka and established an assembly at Giampondo. This was the first ever assembly with EAPC to be planted. In the beginning the Church was known as Kenya Faith Mission. At the Coast, the first assembly was planted at Magongo. The name of the church changed to East Africa Pentecostal Churches during its official registration with Kenya registrar of societies in 1974.

The name Kenya Faith Mission continued to be used overseas for fund raising purposes. The church currently has expanded to many parts of Kenya. However the church is more rooted in Meru, Mombasa, Embu, with a few other branches in Kirinyaga, Nairobi and Western parts of Kenya. It has over 1,200 churches, 900 pastors, and 23 church districts. EAPC has 120 Parishes and 500,000 church members. (Rioba 2003, 7). In Tharaka North church District where the research is to be done, the church has 8 parishes, 8 parish overseers, and over 60 pastors.

This study explores issues surrounding the ordination of women as church ministers and leaders in East Africa Pentecost Church. I have been prompted to do

this study because I am not aware of any woman in the denomination who has ever been ordained a minister or a leader in any other capacity leading both men and women. Women in this church are not allowed to take any leadership roles such as church elders, deacons or own other national positions in the church leadership. None of them is a local church pastor. However they are allowed to teach, preach and even do evangelism along with other recognized church leaders. The only place where women are allowed to lead is that of leading other women but none at all where ladies lead men and women. The cause is to be determined after this study and appropriate recommendations be issued.

The paper has five main chapters. Chapter one presents the problem statement, research questions, purpose of the study, significance of the study, and the limitations and delimitations. Chapter two contains the literature review, while chapter three explains the methods and procedures used in this study. Chapter four reveals the study's findings. The last chapter supplies conclusions and recommendations.

Problem Statement

East Africa Pentecost Church in Kenya was founded in 1953, now over 50 years ago. The church has over six hundred ordained church ministers all over the country, yet none of these ministers is a woman. The reasons underlying this phenomenon are unclear. The EAPC's constitution does not take a position regarding the ordination of women. The church's ministers and members appear unable to explain the phenomenon. Nevertheless, the church has yet to ordain its first female minister.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to discover the reasons the EAPC does not ordain women and describe the perceptions held by of EAPC denomination leaders concerning the ordination of women as church ministers.

Research Questions

This study was guided by three major questions.

1. What is the perception of church leaders regarding ordination of women?
2. What role does culture play in the perception of the ordination of women?
3. What role does the biblical teaching play in the perception of the ordination of women in EAPC?

Significance of the Study

The study will help the East Africa Pentecost Church understand its leaders' convictions and practices regarding the role of women, in general, and women's ordination, in particular. Further, it will clarify the underlying causes of these convictions and practices. Its findings also will shed light on the beliefs and practices in other churches, both in Kenya and elsewhere. Finally, the study will contribute to an understanding of beliefs and practices of the proponents and the opponents of women's ordination in other parts of the world and other church denominations. It is my prayer the study will cause denominational leaders to re-consider their position regarding the ordination of women.

Limitations

The use of interview method to collect data limited the number of study participants. Due to lack of time and finances, the study covered only the Tharaka area church district.

Delimitations

In this study, delimitation refers to the areas the researcher did not seek to cover. The study did not seek to cover every member or leader of the Church organization. Only one general overseer was interviewed. Four other church leaders who have worked for over twenty years with the church also were interviewed. Although there are seven parishes, I have chosen a few pastors who have the information since the inception of the church in the area.

Definition of Terms

Ordination: There are many definitions of this term but in this study we will go by the one provided by Dayton Donald. According to Dayton, ordination is a call by the Holy Spirit. But before one becomes a minister of the Gospel in the fullest sense, his divine call must be acknowledged and duly ratified by the church. One biblical example is the call of Paul. He was divinely called and in formal manner ordained. (1985, 27)

Ordination in East Africa Pentecost Church: After an individual has been duly examined and believed to be called to the office, the General Overseers lays hands on the candidate and prays for him. , giving him the authority to do pastoral duties.

Church: Is used in this study to refer to the church denomination.

Leader: One presiding over a congregation made up of both men and women.

Abbreviations

EAPC: East Africa Pentecost Church.

NIV: New International Version (Unless otherwise indicated, this is the version quoted in this study.)

NRSV: New Revised Standard Version

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

I have undertaken to gather information for and against ordination of women and the basis for each argument. There are two schools of thought regarding women's ordination; the egalitarians and complementarians. Egalitarians are those who believe that all facets of ministry ought to be open to women, while complementarians believe that women can properly serve only in supportive roles (Grenz and Kjesbo 1995, 19). I have also given the historical cultural background of the Tharaka people among whom the study was conducted, and the historical background of the Jewish culture through whom the New Testament was written.

Status of Women in Tharaka Culture

In general the status of women is the same throughout Africa, although there are occasional minor differences. The Tharaka community is Bantu speaking, living in the Eastern province of Kenya. They are members of the old Meru District which was later subdivided into four districts: Meru Central, Meru North, Meru South and Tharaka. According to the 1998 census, the Tharaka people numbered about 150,000. They are not only in the Tharaka District, but are also scattered in other districts such as Mbeere, Meru North, Mwingi and Meru Central district.

Women among the Tharaka people are considered inferior to men. It is not unusual to hear Tharaka men referring to Tharaka women as being like children in their behavior and character. The men also say that they do not cry; only women do. Women, especially those who are married, are considered to be men's property.

Culturally women are to be seen and never to be heard. In the Tharaka system of government women are never involved in decision making. They are considered non-members in the legal system.

Among the Meru, of which Tharaka is a sub-tribe, there is a council of elders that is called Njuri Ncege. No woman is allowed in this council of elders. The council is hierarchical in that it is established from the village to the higher level of the Meru people as a whole. This system still exists today. Women are not given any position of public leadership. As stated by Veneranda Tabu in his thesis regarding Rwandese people, men are considered to be the head of any family, and the man is the one responsible for organizing all the activities of the family (2002, 28). It is a concept which is still widely practiced by those living in rural and urban settings. Women are not only considered the property of their husbands, but also of the entire clan and tribe. They have no rights regarding their children. Children are never given clan names of their mothers, nor are they allowed to use their mother's name as a family name. Children must use the name of their fathers. Tharaka people have a patriarchal system of lineage. Women have no right to inherit their father's property either. They are seen only as child-bearers.

In the case of divorce, women in Tharaka are allowed to take only their clothing and nothing else. In the Tharaka culture, only men are allowed to be involved in public activities such as hunting, and meetings. As late as the 1950s, Tharaka women were not allowed to go to school since school is a public activity. A women's place is seen as being at home.

All these gender activities made women feel inferior. However, there has been a major change regarding this perception. Women have been gradually allowed to

access education and public leadership. Although these changes have occurred, the Njuri Ncege still does not permit women to sit in its meetings.

Status of Women in Judaism

The place of women in Judaism during Biblical times seems to have been a paradox. There was at that time a well-known saying in the synagogue service which said, "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast not made me a woman" (Ryrie 1970, 7-8). However, in the Old Testament in the Book of Proverbs, there are lofty words concerning womanhood (Prov. 31:10, 25-28). In this passage women are seen as being very precious and are compared to expensive precious stones. Ryrie notes that this paradoxical view of women is to be understood in light of the sphere of women serving among the Jews. To the Jews, the place of women was the home. It was at home where her dignity could be affirmed or not. Ryrie asserts, "Public affairs and public activities lie outside the home –and therefore outside woman's special sphere" (1970, 8). The prayer of men in the synagogue was very different from that of women. While men were thankful for not being created women, women prayed, "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who hast made me according to thy will" (8). Ryrie further states that; Judaism generally perceived of women as inferior to men, though they did not demand total subjection to men as the Mohammedans did. He further comments that, in the Jewish community, the status of women, their private life and dignity was well illustrated at home. He says, "Immediately there came to mind outstanding women in Jewish history such as Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, Rachel (designated the four mothers by the Rabbis) as well as Manoah's wife, whose private lives played an important part in Israel's history" (9).

The inferiority of females was clearly manifested at the birth of a child. The purification rite of the mother after giving birth to a female took longer than that of the male child. In the education sector, boys were preferred in some disciplines over girls; a distinction was made by Rabbis in education. Women were forbidden to pursue legal studies because the Rabbis thought that girls were unable to grasp legal concepts. (Ryrie 1970, 9) However, education for girls was not entirely neglected.

The paradoxical situation of subordination and dignity is further illustrated in matrimonial matters. It was seen in legal rights that women's dignity was their activities at home. This means that a woman was seen to be of dignity depending on her success of activities at home. Legally, the position of a Jewish woman was very low. (1970, 9)

Public life for Jewish women was same as religious life. A woman's life, according to the Jewish culture, was neither passive nor one of leadership. In the Mosaic Law, women were not prohibited from having a relationship with God. It was this relationship with God that made the difference between the Jewish women and women of other nations who had no intimate relationship with their gods. Ryrie points out that, although this was a Jewish woman's position, yet in practice this was not the case. He states, "Although the position was thus, the practice was not, for the majority of women were entirely dependent upon man. In religious matters women were a sort of appendix to their husbands, who by their good actions insured salvation also for them" (11). The major contribution of Jewish women was that of domestic activities and motherhood. This is contrary to the view that was expressed in the Gospel of Thomas. According to this gospel, women were not worthy of anything. Grudem quotes the gospel as saying,

Simon Peter said to them 'Let Mary go away from us, for women are not worthy of life.' Jesus said, 'Lo, I shall lead her, so that I may make her a male,

that she too may become a living Spirit, resembling you males. For, every woman who makes herself a male will enter the kingdom of heaven' (67)

Views on Women's Ordination

There are two main areas that I will dwell on as I discuss the views regarding ordination of women. I will look at the complementarian view and the egalitarian point of view. The Old and New Testament passages to be discussed are used by both sides for their argument. Chapter two of Genesis will be much reflected in this discussion and Paul's letters. There are some passages that are considered in Paul's letters as prohibiting women from talking during the church service compared with other letters he wrote that appear to be very positive regarding women's participation in the church.

The other area I will be considering is Paul's letters that bring men and women together in the work of ministry during Paul's missionary journeys and recommendations Paul gave concerning women in the in the ministry. The discussion will also examine Old Testament passages that are seen to be contributing to the subject. The two major views regarding women ordination will be the climax of this section, and finally a conclusion is provided.

Women as Subordinate

Among the two schools of thought regarding women ordination into the ministry, the complementarians are more supportive of the idea that women were created by God as subordinate beings to men. The complementarians find in Genesis 2 clear pointers to God's design for creation. They consider this passage as a timeless truth which shows natural subordination of women to man in the divine order of creation. Grenz writes, "distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by

God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart” (1995, 160). Grenz says that the complementarians see Genesis 2 as the passage where subordination is clearly established. Further, this text has the support of other passages throughout the Bible. This gives them a reason to eliminate women from the church roles naturally (161). He writes, “The choice of all male apostolate is the result or expression of the principle of... the subordination of the woman in the church... the principle of woman’s subordination in the church is buttressed by biblical history from beginning to end” (61).

The complementarians find in Genesis 2 four reasons to give why women are seen as subordinates: “Woman was created after man, woman was created from man, woman was named by man, and woman was created for man. Based on these arguments complementarians conclude that women should not lead men. This calls for the church to choose between the ordination and subordination of women” (161).

The narrative in Genesis 2 shows that God created man first (Gen.2:18-23). To the complementarians the obvious implication is that hierarchy is inherent in the order of creation. Woman is supposed to be subordinate to man in all spheres of life and not in marriage alone. Hence, the exclusion of women from ordination is based on the order established in creation (161).

The opponents of ordination for women feel that they have additional credence from about the order of creation by Paul’s writings in the New Testament. They argue that Paul appeals to creation order to substantiate his teaching about the role of women in the church. “Indeed, man was not made from a woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man (1Cor.11:8-9, 1Tim. 2:13 NRSV). Out of these passages, the apostle advocating for narrative taught the subordination of women.

However, Grenz believes that these passages viewed in their context do not in any way bring women to level of subordination. He writes,

Viewed in its own context, the creation narrative does not explicitly indicate that a hierarchy of male over female was part of God's original intention. In fact, we could also read the story in a manner that sees the woman as the more important of the two characters. The first creation narrative is governed by the principle of the ascending order of creation, the highest creation of God appearing last. Applying this axiom to the second account yields the conclusion that being created second places the woman above, not below the man (1995, 161).

Close examination of the complementarians' argument exposes its weakness. For example, we cannot say, since waters were created before man, they are more important. Complementarians claim that the fact that man named the woman makes her subordinate in nature. They argue that in the Old Testament context, whoever took the responsibility of naming was superior to the one being named. Since God charged man with naming of all other creatures, man had dominion over the rest of God's creation. "This prerogative was extended to Adam's naming of his helper" (163). In answer to this the egalitarians say that naming the woman had nothing to do with the establishment of power over her; it was rather a moment to rejoice in mutuality (163.)

The most pronounced platform used by the complementarians is that which expresses the intentions of God for creating a woman. She was to be a suitable helper for the man (Gen. 2:18:18, 20). God's declaration gives them a point to assert that woman was created for the man's purpose. Creation for 'man,' they conclude, means that God intends woman to be subordinate to man (Grenz 1995, 163) Those opposed to women leadership and ordination have found refuge in some passages that Paul has written, and which I believe are wrongly interpreted. The passages are explained here below.

In Paul's writing there are some passages in the scriptures that are seen to be putting women under subordination to men in church ministry. These have caused a

huge divergence of understanding of his teachings on women's role in the church. These are: 1Corinthians 11:9, Ephesians 5:23 and 1Timothy 2:12ff. Regarding these passages Kuhns Dennis notes, "These statements form the touchstones for the teaching of an order of creation and thus as restrictions forbidding women to serve in certain offices of the church" (1978, 48). Based on the above argument we need to find out what Paul really meant by saying that women should not be allowed to speak in church. Grudem Wayne, a renowned contemporary theologian, picks up the subject well as if in support of the women as equals in all spheres of church ministry but as he gets along takes the complementarian's view. He undertakes to answer the questions whether women as well as men may be pastors, and may share in all the offices of the church. To him the creation story in Genesis 1:27 is of great importance in this discussion. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" This verse views men and women as equally created in the image of God, attributing to men and women equal value to God and, consequently having absolutely equal values before man. "Moreover, scripture assures men and women of equal access to all the blessings of salvation (Acts 2:17-18, Galatians 3:28). This is remarkably affirmed in the high dignity and respect which Jesus accorded to women in his earthly ministry (1994, 937). Grudem accuses evangelicals of failure to recognize women as having full value with men.

The result has been a tragic failure to recognize that God often gives women equal or greater spiritual gifts than men, a failure to encourage women to have full and free participation in the various ministries of the church, and failure to take full account of the wisdom that God has given to women with respect to important decisions in the life of the church. If the present controversy over women's roles in the church can result in the eradication of some of these past abuses, then the church as a whole will benefit greatly" (1994, 937).

In Grudem's understanding, value does not necessarily mean allowing both men and women to exercise their gifts at will but rather the scriptures allow men to

perform some duties and not women. He goes ahead to say that the Bible does not allow women to function in the role of pastor or elder within a church. He gives several reasons that we will look at. He begins with Paul's letter to Timothy. 1Tim.2:11-14. To him this passage is a single one that addresses this question in a most direct manner.

A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner (1Timothy 2:11-14)

He argues that the context in which Paul was addressing the issue was that of an assembled church. He refers us to verses 8-9, which gives the true picture of the context in which Paul wrote. It is in this setting of the assembled church that Paul refuses women to speak. In any assembly, according to Grudem, women should not talk. This is the role of elders.

The fact that Adam was created first is enough to hinder women from addressing men in any assembly. These functions are unique to elders and that is what Paul prohibits for women in the church. When Grudem gets to 1 Corinthians 14: 33b-36, which contains similar information about women, he seems not to be inconsistent with his argument. The passage says in part, "As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission as the law says." Grudem says that in this section Paul cannot be prohibiting all public speech by women in the church, for he clearly allows them to pray and prophecy in church in 1Cor. 11:15. According to Grudem, although women are allowed to speak in public and prophesy, the duty of evaluations or critiques of the prophecies would be a ruling and that is the sole responsibility of men. (ibid, 934)

We will need to look at the verses in their original context. The letter to Galatians, which is called a "freedom manifesto," was written much earlier than 1

Corinthians. Did Paul change his mind, and, if so, for what reason? Stagg and Stagg assert,

Probably what most accounts for Paul's seeming change of directions as he moves from the concern of Galatians to those of 1 Corinthians is the rise of a new problem, that of the throwing off of all restraints by some at Corinth who saw themselves as spiritual (1 Cor. 3:1-3:1-3). These "Pneumatics" seize upon Paul's doctrine of freedom, but they applied it in ways which Paul disapproved (1978, 169)

The Corinthians looked at themselves boastfully and were involved in all kinds of immoral activities. They committed incest. They boasted that they had all knowledge. They believed that all things were lawful. This position puffed them up and led to spiritual destruction (1Cor. 11-14). This is what Paul saw and he wanted to correct the situation. "Apparently Paul saw at Corinth a misapplication of freedom and sought to curb it. It may have been that women and slaves, in particular, were making the most of their freedom in Christ, extending it into all the structures of church and society in a way which Paul thought to threaten those structures" (Stagg and Stagg, 1978, 169). The Bible is a book that is open to everyone to read and interpret. Many read it not to get meaning out of, but put into the text their own prejudiced ideas. Thus 1Corinthians 14 and 1Timothy have been harshly used against women. Kuhns observes,

These verses are variously interpreted from a very severe restriction on a woman's participation in the life of the congregation (not being permitted to pray, read scriptures, or even take part in business meetings) to simply a restriction in the office that can be held by a woman. Such wide divergence should give everyone a sense of caution as we come to these passages (1978, 50).

Since the fall, man has always gone far away from God's intended purpose in life. This is what has made mankind feel the need for classification which results in oppressive behaviors in the society. Paul's epistles have been wrongly interpreted to suit the selfish end of male humankind. Kuhns states, "the key to interpreting these

passages is to stay by the context in which they are found. The admonition for women to be silent in 1 Corinthians is part of Paul's appeal for orderliness in worship" (51).

Worse still the argument from the nature of woman has nothing to do with biblical principles but is due to the very evil nature of human beings. Jewett states, "Through Christian history, it has been more or less taken for granted that women should not be admitted to the ranks of the ordained clergy for the obvious reason that they are women" (1980, 4).

Theologians do base their discussions more on who a woman is than their ministry, although the two cannot be separated. Again Jewett writes, "To the question 'what is woman?' The early fathers of the church answered that, she is 'the devil's gateway' though one woman in due time was recognized as the 'queen of Heaven' (4). This is a mentality that is difficult to explain, in that one is seen as the devil's gateway and at the same time a queen of Heaven. The argument is a real paradox, and this reflects on how unreasonable the reasons for not allowing women into ordination could be. The fact that Eve ate the fruit and gave it to Adam remains a reason for them to believe that Eve or a woman is a devil's gateway. They should have taken the same perception that Adam had for not seeing his own sin and repent of the same but blamed it on Eve. Jewett writes,

Blinded by the prejudice which led them to fault the woman as the first to offend God's law, it seems never to have occurred to the fathers that the specific shortcomings of the feminine sex, with which they were familiar, might be due not to an essential weakness of character but to the dis-abilities inflicted by Greco-roman culture for them the woman, per definitinem, was the weaker vessel, slow of understanding unstable in mind, liable to deception, the one whose disobedience had ruined the man, the image and the glory of God, and required the death of the son of God (1980, 5)

With this kind of prejudiced background of the church leaders, there is no reason to doubt that they will carry the same mentality into the Bible as they interpret and practice the same biasness against women. The same practice is carried on from

generation to generation, hindering the ordination of women into the pastoral offices. The scriptures are used as pretext to support preconceived objectives.

Grudem comes up with a list of the roles that he thinks women should play in the church. He does not give us any reference from the scriptures to support his assertions. He goes on to say,

Women are never called to be pastors, elders but can be called into full time Christian ministry. ... In fact many opportunities for full time occupational ministry exist within the local church and elsewhere, apart from being a teaching pastor or an elder-for example, church staff positions in counseling, women's ministries, Christian education, and children's ministries, as well as ministries of music and worship, campus student ministries, evangelistic ministries, ministry to the poor, and administrative responsibilities that do not involve functioning in the elder's role of government over the entire church. (1994, 943)

Since the discussion is scripture based, we expect Grudem to have given us biblical references that support his argument. In his earlier reason for not allowing women not to speak in an assembly, he said that this is to avoid women making evaluations and critique. All these ministries, such as teaching and evangelism will obviously require some kind of evaluation of what is happening in the ministry.

I agree with Jewett in what he says regarding those people who are opposed to women's ordination into the ministry, that they have a hidden agenda and do not have any biblical support for their stand. "While the image of woman as the devil's gateway has undoubtedly relinquished much of its traditional power over the minds of men in the contemporary debate about her qualification for the Christian ministry the woman is still accused of being the vehicle of temptation in the male" (1980, 6-7).

He bases his argument on the fact that women are seen by men to be easily moved by women and are easily stimulated. He says religious emotions and sexual emotions are similar. Jewett quotes Williams N.P for his imposing argument against ordination of women and states, "Williams ... bases his argument on the well known,

though mysterious affinity between religious emotion and sex- emotion in virtue of which the stimulation of the religious instinct may, by kind of subconscious reverberation, under certain circumstances, simultaneously stimulate that per se less supernatural instinct which is closely allied to it" (1980, 7).

With this in mind, the only possible conclusion to those against the ordination of women is to argue that those "whose personal presence is not likely in a liturgical or sacramental atmosphere, to exercise any distracting effect upon worshippers of the opposite sex" (Jewett, 1980, 7). This leaves men as the only option for the ordination since they are "very less likely to be an involuntary cause of distraction to women under the circumstances of public worship, than women are to men, and that is a permanent fact of human nature which can no more be abolished by modern progress than the law of gravitation can be abolished by modern progress" (7-8).

The suggestion that is left for the women to be allowed to perform public activities is only if they would be invisible in their operations. We have seen that the activities allowed are those of being Christian education teachers. This too had its problems according to Jewett.

Furthermore, to limit the argument to a strictly religious context, and allow that, although she may not lead the worshipping congregation, a woman may deliver lectures to a mixed class in a university, only reminds one acquainted with history that it was not always so. Novella d' Andrea (A.D 1312-1366) one of the few women admitted to a chair in the venerable University of Bologna, lectured on philosophy and law behind a curtain, lest her face distract her male students (1980, 9).

These and many other arguments directed towards against ordination of women are not godly at all. They are based on human weakness. This is why Jesus taught, "you have heard that it was said, do not commit adultery. But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mathew 5:27). I believe these are practical issues that the church should be

fighting against not the ordination of women. Women are every where in public and, lustful look can only be controlled by allowing the Holy Spirit of God to fill us and control our minds. If man shall have these things in mind that he is weak and wicked, then Paul's letters concerning women will have no self centered effects in us. We shall be able to look at his messages as Kuhns argues below.

Although Paul had earlier given freedom to all in Christ Jesus, this did not necessarily invite disorderliness in Christian gatherings and consequence use of scriptures to keep women away from serving God. If anything, this freedom should have resulted in good manners and better conduct than ever before. It has never been a tradition among God's people to be disorderly. Thus, Kuhns quotes Dorothy Yodes Nyce as having said, "With women and prophets, orderliness of worship is still to be maintained in spite of the new freedom found in Christ" (1978, 51). This supports my argument in support of women to serve in all capacities. I do not understand how God would have called for women's silence in the church. The devil is seriously using women in many spiritual evil things just like men to build his kingdom and fight God's kingdom. We, therefore, agree that Paul has never been against women serving in the church. Although Paul's teachings have sparked theological discussion, never did he at one time speak on against the nature of women. Jesus Christ also during his ministry here on earth did not speak against the ordination of women in the ministry.

In his writings, Paul encourages both men and women to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. The fruits of the Spirit, he says, are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. Paul also commanded both men and women to be strong in the Lord (Gal.5:22). "There is no feminine mystique according to Paul" (Brown 1991, 159). On the Day of Pentecost all believers, both men and women, were filled with the Holy Spirit, and all of them

spoke in tongues. Peter reminded those who were observing and wondering about the people speaking in tongues that this was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy,

In the last days, God says, I will pour out my spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophecy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams even on my servant, both men and women. I will pour out my spirit in those Days (Joel 2:28-29).

Paul writes to the Corinthians exhorting them to use the gifts given to them by the Holy Spirit for the common good of the church (1Cor. 12:7). Paul did not exclude women in this. In this same chapter, Paul says that the gifts are given according to the wish of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the one who distributes spiritual gifts, and he does so according to his own will. If the Holy Spirit chooses to give a certain spiritual gift to a woman, who is man to question God's will?

I am also impressed by what Paul wrote to the Ephesians concerning the possession and putting on of the whole armor of God. Paul requires all Christians to obey this. Our battle is not of blood and flesh. This is important to note, for our spirit is neither male nor female. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Eph. 6:12). There is no doubt that Paul did not discriminate in who should have the full armor of God. Both men and women are the devil's target. Neither men nor women can fight spiritual battles on their own strength; they need the power of the Holy Spirit. All of us need to be fully equipped for the battle in the same way.

Women Fellow Workers with Paul

Paul in his writings kept on mentioning women who had been participating in the ministry of the word and occasionally calls them fellow workers. He would not have contradicted himself that much if he knew that they were not supposed to serve

anywhere and at anytime. Powers Wards defends Paul's position when he states, "In particular, Paul recognizes women as fellow-workers and partners in the giant enterprise of taking the transforming gospel of Christ to a sin sick world. Men and women each have a share in ministry in the kingdom" (1996, 26).

Paul did not only talk of women as fellow workers, but also men like Timothy. Paul uses the same term to refer to women as co-workers and men, meaning all were equal before God in the ministry. If we read in Philippians 2:19-23 we see that Timothy had served with him in the work of the ministry. Paul writing in the same epistle, talks about two women who were of use to him in the work. He writes, pleading with the two women that they may agree with each other in the Lord. Paul says they had contended at his side in the cause of the gospel. He takes a step further and asserts that their names are written in the book of life. He refers to them as co-workers in Philippians 4:2, 3.

This passage in Philippians 4:2-3 even makes it clearer to us that Paul was not opposed to women working for Christ. Paul puts women in the same category with men and assures us that he knew their names were written in the book of life. Powers does not leave his own opinion hanging in his contribution to the subject. He goes on further and says that: "Working in the Gospel means participating in the work of evangelism" (1996, 26). Paul also commends other women elsewhere in his writings. In his letter to the Romans, Paul mentions other women who were active in ministry. Phoebe is addressed as a deacon of the church at Cenchrea. Paul writes, "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people including me" (Romans 16:1, 2).

There are enough reasons to believe that women are acceptable in the Bible to serve like everyone else. It is the Holy Spirit who enables us to do the work of God not our gender. Paul recognizes the role played by Priscilla and Aquila in the work of evangelism. There are several references made by Paul about them as active ministers of the Word. In Acts 18:26 and Romans 16:5 Paul refers to them as fellow workers in Christ Jesus. Paul also notes, “They risked their lives not only for me, but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them.”

Spiritual Equality

In examining Paul’s writings, I will look at the key emphasis of Paul’s writings, the spiritual quality. Paul’s teachings to the Galatians emphasize the freedom of all. Paul writes, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).

In Paul’s epistle to the Galatians he addresses the issue that caused hindrance to freedom in Christ. In Mosaic Law, there were some restrictions based on races and social status which was carried on into the New Testament era. In this manifesto, none can be allowed to stop people of various categories from serving Christ. Paul says that neither male nor female nor even racial background is of any importance in Christ.

The text above (Gal. 3:28) settles all questions of equality between men and women and their service in ministry. The Mosaic Law made a distinction between a Jew and a Gentile and this passage notes that Jews and Gentiles are all equal. Therefore, the same principle applies that men and women are equal as far as spiritual matters are concerned Stagg Evelyn and Stagg Frank state that, “Sexual difference is a fact and an important one, with relevance to human existence; but so far as our being in Christ is concerned, being male or female is not a proper agenda item” (1978, 163). All believers belong to the one family of Jesus Christ and no individual has more

rights than any other individual regardless of gender. Unfortunately, the Bible is often interpreted with a lot of preconceived ideas. Many read and teach the Bible from their cultural background and give no attention to what God intended to do with women in his work. The view of Maxwell with Dearing has a lot to say regarding women's involvement in the church service. They assert,

After the lapse of many centuries, this great apostolic saying has now yielded up its fuller meaning and blessing... every Jewish male was taught to thank God daily that "God had not made him a Gentile, a slave, or a woman (1987, 73).

If any man from this culture where men are thankful for not being created as females came across the passage in which Paul wrote, "A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent" (1Tim.2:11-12). The person would right away bring in his world view regarding women in the society and would not allow them to take any role in public leadership. Straightaway, he would say this is what we believe as well. However, when some people read what Paul said in Galatians, that all are one in Christ regardless of gender many would find it difficult to agree with this idea of equality (Gal. 3:28).

Paul had the Jewish tradition in mind when he wrote. He takes a courageous step and rules out these conditions of inequality in Christ. Paul declares these differences as futile and of no consequence in New Christian living. These traditions have enslaved many in Christian circles today. There is no distinction between male and female in the Lord, and thus both share equal privileges. During the time when the law was being enforced, only men would be allowed to become priests. In the New Testament, we are all the children of the father and as such all have the privilege of being priests unto him (Maxwell and Dearing 1987, 73). This phrase is used in

Galatians to mean that it is to enter into personal relationship with Christ but also may mean being in same family with Christ Jesus. In line with this is 1 Peter 2:9 “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

Stagg and Stagg wrote, “. . . to be in Christ is to be in the church, the body of Christ” (1978, 163). Those in Christ are members of his body regardless of race or gender. “Those are distinctions traceable to physical birth or legal code. Being in Christ is of another character and another origin” (1978, 163). Paul, in speaking to the Galatians, tells them we are the children of God through faith. “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:26).

The book of Galatians, which Paul extensively used to express his views regarding Christian freedom, is seen as a manifesto. In the book to Galatians, Paul expresses his views pertaining to the issues of salvation and distinctions that took place at that time. Stagg and Stagg refer to Galatians 3:28 as a “manifesto” of freedom. This passage is widely used by feminists to argue in favor of women ministers in the church. On the other hand, House refers to Gal. 3:28 as “The Magna Carta of Humanity” (House 1990, 113), but says that when Galatians 3:28 is closely examined, it does not support the argument that “women are functionally interchangeable with men in the Christian community” (114).

This passage in the scripture has caused a lot of theological dissension when compared with other passages in which Paul appears to speak against freedom for women. Those who have always advocated for restricted female participation in church ministry do not see this verse as being one that gives freedom to women to be equal with men in spiritual matters.

Some people feel that Galatians 3:28 sets a doctrinal standard for women as being equal to men in all kinds of spiritual activities. However, House quotes Boucher as one of those who does not think that this passage supports women involvement in church leadership. According to House, Boucher says,

What Galatians 3:28 is saying is that persons of both high and low position can be brought together in the church. If so then Paul was not calling for any social reforms; inequalities would continue to exist in the church. Paul fully intended that women and slaves remain in the subordinate place in which he thought God had put them (1990, 114).

This view of subordination is extremely non-canonical. However, even before we get to the discussion of subordination, Boucher's assertion is not in line with my view who strongly believes in spiritual equality. I do agree with the view that House presents when he argues, "Paul is intending to teach that there are no areas of discrimination in reference to heir-ship in the Abrahamic covenant, to those who have faith in Christ" (1990, 114).

Those who believe in the passage "neither male nor female" to be an obliteration of role distinction between male and female have seen Paul as having a two-faceted approach to the subject under discussion. He is said to have been reversing the order of creation and is in support of the new redemptive order. Secondly, the Jew/Gentile, slave/free and male/female categories are functional not positional (House 1990, 115). House, in support of this view, quotes Robin Scroggs who believes the passage demonstrates the obliteration of role distinction between male and female. According to House, Scroggs says,

To enter the Christian community thus meant to join a society in which male/female roles and valuations based on such roles had been discarded. The community was powerless to alter role valuations in the outside culture, but within the church, behavior and interrelationships were to be based on their affirmation of equality (1990, 115).

Men in most African cultures have opposed any idea that would indicate that they are equal to women in any area of life. They hold to what pleases them, especially regarding the passage of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 which easily agrees with most traditions especially the African place of women in the society and their respective roles. It is always equally difficult to bring a change in any given tradition. Once the Word of God is taken to any culture, the word is seen through the lenses of the culture, until a proper teaching based on context is done. There is always resistance that, however, dies with time.

Galatians 3:28 should be applied not only to equality in spiritual matters, but equality in all spheres of life. This understanding of Gal. 3:28 does not overemphasize the point of equality, but gives the passage rightful place in scripture. Understanding Galatians 3:28 to apply to all areas of life is not a perversion of the context of the Bible as a whole. In fact, this verse is in line with the creation story of man and woman in Genesis. We read that God created man and woman in his own image and likeness. "Male and Female he created them" (Genesis 1:26-28). House supports this idea when he states, "the Genesis text concerns the very being and nature of male and female, and since both were made in the image of God. Paul could use this text to best emphasize the unity of male and female as new creations in Christ" (House 1990, 115).

Both man and woman were created by God's own hands and given his own breath. There is no reason to doubt that they are equal before God. They emerge at the same time from God and when one stands as an individual, as a man or as woman, God's image is incomplete before God. House once again says quoting Eichrodt as having said, "Because man and woman emerge at the same time from the hand of the creator, and are created in the same way after God's image, the difference between the

sexes is no longer relevant to their position before God” (House 1990, 117). Donald Dayton strongly opposes the idea of discriminating against women on the basis of sex. To him, any attempt to deny women ordination or any other position based on gender is due to an ignorance of this holy part of scripture recorded in Galatians 3:28. Dayton states, “To make any distinction in the Church of Jesus Christ, between males and females purely on the ground of sex is virtually to strike this text from the sacred volume, for it affirms that in Christ there is no difference between males and females, that they are all one in regard to the gospel of the grace of God” (1985, 5).

This is a clear indicator that whatever men are allowed to do in the Church of Jesus Christ women, too, have a right to do. If men can be ordained, women should be ordained; if men are allowed to preach, women also should be allowed to preach. There is no passage in the scriptures, whether New or Old Testament, where this kind of argument against the ordination of women can be traced. In fact, in the Old Testament Deborah was made a judge by God to lead Israelites. She fought battles which some of the men in her nation were not able to fight. The Bible records that “Barak said to her, ‘If you go with me, I will go; but if you don’t go with me I won’t go.’ ‘Very well’ Deborah said. ‘I will go with you. But because of the way you are going about this, the honor will not be yours, for the Lord will hand Sisera over to a woman’” (Judges 4:8-9). Later in this story we see that Sisera was killed by Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite (4:17). Some of the reasons given by others against ordination of women are based on the combination of the disciples of Jesus.

The twelve who Jesus called apostles were all men. There were no women apostles. However, Jesus himself did not say anything against the ordination of women. Dayton argues, “But it is said if women are to preach, why did he not chose a woman among the twelve? We ask in reply, if gentiles are to preach, why did he not

choose a gentile among the twelve? Why were the twelve Jews, every one of them? The example is as binding in the one case as the other” (1985, 54). It would be a total contradiction of sound principles of interpretation to say that the passage in Gal. 3:28, offers Greeks an equal standing with Jews in Christ, but that this does not carry through to males and females in the same passage.

In her contribution to this discussion, Haubert sees Paul as having the opinion that women are of equal standing with men in spiritual matters. The new identity in Jesus Christ has nothing to do with traditions, cultural mores, and practices. “The face of Christ mirrors her new identity and her worth is matched by the price of his shed blood” (1973, 30). Haubert examines what Paul teaches in Galatians 3:26-29 in light of Ephesians 1:3, and argues that Paul is proclaiming a new identity and essential unity of Christian equality. This is the unveiling of a divine masterpiece. Haubert argues,

The brush strokes blend to point a portrait of the new creature in Christ. This Portrait is the divine masterpiece of all who share the Christian faith; Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female. (v.28)” It is the portrait that is to be formed as woman’s new identity, for it recaptures the realities of the creator’s original intent. Gen 1:27-28 (30).

Haubert further argues that the figure represented is not a restoration of the traditional sexual and cultural patterns. It is a new masterpiece that replaces the scarred faces of racial (Jew-Greek), social (slave-free) and sexual (male- female) antagonism (30)

Conclusion

Paul's writings have, over the years, caused theological schisms due to what may be a contradiction of views regarding women in church ministry. Some people do not really understand whether Paul was an advocate of liberation for women or not. On the other hand, those who read the Bible sometimes interpret it out of context.

The study done above shows that neither Paul nor Jesus was in any way opposed to women serving in the church. Paul, rather, supported the work of women although he had grown up in a culture that looked down on women. We see Paul making many references to women as fellow-workers in the ministry. Paul also gives freedom to all, irrespective of race, sex and social status. In Christ Jesus we are all one and equal.

In Paul's letter to the Galatians, often referred to as a "manifesto of freedom," Paul says neither male nor female is superior to one another (Gal. 3:28). Thus, it is clearly seen that Paul was a good supporter of spiritual equality. He supported the infilling of all believers by the power of Holy Spirit. To put more emphasis on Galatians 3:28, Dayton asserts that, "It is contrary to all sound principles of interpretation to say that this passage accords to a Greek the same rights in the Gospel that it does to a Jew, in one sense and to a woman the same rights that it does to a man in another, and much more restricted sense" (1985, 55). According to Dayton this should bring an end to a long standing conflict on the issue of women serving in the ministry. The passage takes away the fetters from women and leaves them free to serve in any capacity in the body of Christ. Thus, the struggle should be seen as outdated for it has no biblical basis at all. Both men and women must listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches, not what our traditions want us to believe. No special legislation, either by church or state, is needed to give women their proper

place. Leave women as free as men, and they will instinctively find their true place. Why cannot women become ministers of the gospel if God calls them to the position and they qualify for it? If women are called by God, let them answer to him, for all of us are responsible for our own actions. It has not been easy for some to accept the idea of ordaining women as church ministers and leaders in church administration. Christianity is a community that has gone through many changes since its very programmatic covenants with Abraham and David.

Changes have always been difficult to introduce. They take time to be accepted. An example of such changes is that of Gentile Christians who had not been circumcised being accepted by Jews. However, slowly the new ideas permeated into the society.

East Africa Pentecost Church is one of the oldest locally founded independent churches in Kenya. In its early years the members were so spiritually oriented that they had no room for schools, hospitals and other social development agendas. They took a very strict, heaven-oriented approach to evangelism. However, with time they changed and began starting schools, hospitals, and businesses. However, one very shocking practice that remains to be re-considered is the issue of ordination of women to serve as church ministers.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY, METHODS AND PROCEDURES.

Assumptions in Qualitative Study

There are two principal approaches to social science research: qualitative and quantitative. I have chosen to use the qualitative approach in this study. By qualitative research we mean research procedures that produce their findings not based on statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Corbin 1998, 10-11).

The qualitative method of research is usually inductive in nature and comports an emerging design. Data are collected and analyzed in various ways. Many qualitative researchers depend on observation and use of open-ended interviews in data collection. (Starcher 2003, 59)

Assumptions of Grounded Theory

Grounded Theory is a term used by Strauss and Corbin to mean “theory that was derived from data, systematically gathered and analyzed through research process” (Corbin and Strauss 1998, 12). They continue to say that, in this process the three; data collection, analysis, and the theory are closely related to one another. No preconceived theory is in the mind of the researcher to begin with. If this procedure is well followed, theory will resemble the reality.

Strauss and Corbin further say, “grounded theories, because they are drawn from the data, are likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaning guide to action” (1998, 12). In this study the researcher attempts to derive a general, abstract theory of a process, action, or interaction grounded in the views of participants in a study. This process involves using multiple stages of data collection

and the refinement and interrelationship of categories of information. There are two common characteristics of this approach which Creswell takes to be constant: “comparison of data with emerging categories and theoretical sampling, of different groups to maximize the similarities and the differences of information” (Creswell 2003, 14).

For successful and meaningful results to be realized, qualitative evaluation inquiry draws on both critical and creative thinking, both the science and the art of analysis. (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 12) However, creativity is not without its own characteristics according to the two authors. They quote Patton as having come up with a list of characteristics of a creative researcher: 1) Being open to multiple possibilities, 2) generating a list of options, 3) exploring various possibilities before choosing any one, and 4) making use of multiple avenues of expression such as art, music, and metaphors to stimulate thinking. In addition it requires using nonlinear forms of thinking such as view a subject from various angles to get a fresh perspective, trusting the process and not holding back, not taking shortcuts but rather putting energy and effort into the work. One should have it as a fun as he or she does the work. (1998, 13)

Analysis in qualitative study is an-interplay between the researcher and data. It is both science and art. The researcher must be able to maintain a reasonable degree of rigor and thus grounding the analysis in data. This is the scientific part of grounded theory. On the other hand to be artistic, the researcher must show the ability to “aptly name categories, ask stimulating questions, make comparisons, and extract an innovative, integrated, realistic scheme from masses of unorganized raw data” (1998, 13). The balance between the two should be struck when doing research analysis (ibid, 13).

The Role of the Researcher

In this study, I undertook to discover the reasons or perceptions of church leaders regarding women ordination in EAPC Tharaka North Church District. This being a qualitative study, I was the primary data-collection instrument as I conducted in-depth interviews. I was keen in rapport building with the participants which was crucial in this exercise.

In this approach to research, data collection and analysis go hand in hand. Creswell quotes Wolcott as having said,

Qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive. This means that the researcher makes an interpretation of the data. This includes developing a description of an individual or setting , analyzing data for themes, or categories, and finally making an interpretation or drawing conclusions about its meaning personally and theoretically, stating the lessons learned and stating further questions to be asked. (2003, 182)

In this way the researcher was able to filter the data collected and made them ready for analysis.

Methodological Assumptions

Qualitative research is best carried out in its natural setting. Hence the researcher tried as much as possible to go where the respondents were and sought to get the information by use of study guide interview questions. I found all of them in their working environment of the church where they operate as a council. Creswell states that the importance of this approach is that it “enables the researcher to develop a level of detail about the individual or place and to be highly involved in actual experiences of the participants” (2003, 181). This study was descriptive because its intention was to establish the status of things. The researcher tried as much as possible to interact with the respondents to be able to get the information needed for the study following the ideas provided by Creswell.

Data Collection

I collected data using open-ended interview questions with five church leaders in Tharaka North Church District. Interviews were conducted on face-to-face level and the researcher visited the participants in their natural setting. I also consulted the church's archival records. There were no much records available to verify the information given. Respondents' answers were carefully recorded and were read back for each one to confirm the answer the individual had given.

Sampling in Grounded Theory

In qualitative study, sampling is done differently from quantitative sampling. The participants are chosen based on ability to contribute to an evolving theory. It does not require large numbers. What is of importance is the representativeness of the concepts not of persons that is crucial. A single case can indicate a general conceptual category or property and, few more cases can confirm the indication. (Starcher 2003, 65)

I selected research participants by use of a purposeful sampling strategy. Thus the oldest serving leaders who have the information the researcher was seeking were interviewed. This method of sampling helps to "select participants who will facilitate the ability of others" (Seidman 1998, 45).

Plan for Data Analysis

Strauss and Corbin say,

What is important is the process be related to structure, that is, the alignment of actions/interactions to conditions, how these change from one stage to another, variations within a phase, and how the outcomes of one set of actions\interactions feed back into the context to become part of the conditions influencing the next set of actions \interactions. (Strauss and Corbin 1990, 169)

Based on the above view, I collected data based on research questions as stipulated. The study followed the procedures given by Starcher referring to Strauss and Corbin. Data analysis begins with our coding and takes form with memos. There are three types of coding as he identifies them: open, axial and selective. They are not sequential analytical steps but are part of the constant comparative process (Starcher 2003, 66-68).

Open Coding: The data was defined and categorized as soon as possible after the interview with the respondents. I wrote the information given and later went back to re-read to them their information for them to confirm. Open or initial coding is the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data. The process involved analyzing the interviews as they occurred and was done line by line and all sentences and paragraphs were coded. Theory building was necessary in the process so, I had to identify concepts and began developing them in terms of their properties. (Starcher 2003, 66-68)

Axial Coding: Axial coding is not an activity separate from open coding but rather an important aspect of it. It is called axial coding because the analyzing revolves around the axis of one category at a time. The end result is that a cumulative knowledge about relationships between that category and other categories and subcategories are reflected. (2003, 68).

Selective Coding: Starcher quotes Corbin and Strauss as having said, selective coding is the process by which all categories are unified around a core category, and categories that need further explication are filled in with, descriptive detail. The main objective is to come up with a theory which will have a sufficient explanation of the data that now has been collected. (Ibid)

Memo Writing: Strauss and Corbin are again quoted by Starcher as having stated that “memos are the researcher’s record of analysis, thoughts, interpretations, questions and directions for further data collection” (Starcher 2003, 68). The researcher “memos” throughout the data collection and analysis process. Hence, I undertook to write memos during the data collection and during the process of analysis always refining them in order to come up with a clear explanation theory of the study at hand.

After data analysis, there is yet another important step to be undertaken before the data become a theory. This integration, according to Strauss and Corbin, is a fascinating process which does not happen overnight. In the process of integration, one may have an insight; however it is not in magic form. It is a process that takes shape over time. They say that “one begins with the first bit of analysis and does not end until the final writing” (1998, 144). It is an interaction between the data and the analyst. They state, “Brought into that interaction the analytic gestalt, which includes not only who the analyst is but also the evolution of thinking that occurs over time through immersion in the data and the cumulative body of findings that have been recorded in the memos and diagrams” (1998, 144). The analyst has to recognize the prevailing relations as they emerge. Integration is a hard work and must not be taken lightly.

Verification in Grounded Theory

Some researchers, like Strauss, have admitted that a researcher’s interpretation is not expected to be perfect, since it is only God’s interpretation that would be expected to be without fault. The work of any man shall be subjected to further elaboration and verification. (Starcher, 2003, 69) He further gives the five varieties used to verify the work done following grounded theory.

1. Transferability: A theory is transferable when it elaborates concepts that other researchers can transport to similar research problems and to other substantive fields.
2. Trustworthiness: Starcher quotes Haworth as having defined trustworthiness as measures taken to safeguard the accuracy, consistency, and validity of the research findings during the data collection process.
3. Triangulation: triangulation in grounded theory involves collecting data across multiple and different data sources and employing the constant comparative method throughout the collection, analysis and interpretation process.
4. Member checks: Member checks, also called member validation ... involve sharing the results of data collection and analysis with research participants to see whether or not they agree with the researchers findings.
5. Audit trail; an audit trail consists of careful documentation of the research process (e.g., raw data, field notes, intermediate analyses) that allows an independent researcher to verify the procedures utilized in the study (Starcher 2003, 69).

In this study the researcher used the member check method. I will share with the participants the results of data collection and analysis. One copy of my Thesis shall be given to the District office for their use.

Research Procedure

The researcher used open-ended questions to collect data. The questions were restructured in many occasions in order to get complete answer that I was seeking from the respondents. Some questions generated more than one question in an attempt to get a clear message communicated by the participants. This is acceptable in

qualitative study, as Creswell puts it, Qualitative research is emergent rather than tightly prefigured. Several aspects emerge during a qualitative study. The research questions were changed and refined as the inquirer learned what was necessary to ask and whom it should be asked (Creswell 2003, 181).

The researcher used open-ended questions to get information from the individual respondents. This method enabled the researcher to collect ideologies leading to this practice.

Participants

The participants in this study were church leaders who were mainly involved in the planting of churches in the years of EAPC inception. The leaders were able to tell how they started and the changes they have experienced in the past and the current church leadership if any.

Point of Entry

Being a member of the church and one of its ordained ministers, the researcher went easily into the exercise to collect data without delay. I have previously done a research with members and therefore, I am familiar to them than does a foreigner. I however informed the District Overseer of my intent and purpose of the study. He in turn informed his staff about the exercise, that it is not ill intended. I did emphasize that the answers given by any of them will be kept confidential.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

This study was undertaken with the purpose to explore the perceptions of leaders in East Africa Pentecostal Churches (EAPC) on the ordination of women to church ministers and leaderships. The data to this study was collected through interviews that involved five long serving leaders in Tharaka North church district. There were three basic research questions used to collect data as listed below:

1. What is the perception of church leaders regarding ordination of women?
2. What role does culture play in the perception of the ordination of women?
3. What role does the biblical teaching play in the perception of the ordination of women in EAPC?

This study is qualitative in nature, and grounded theory method has been used to discover a theory regarding ordination of women to church ministers and leadership in EAPC. The approach taken in the study serves to analyze the theological issue at hand well, since it focuses on the participant perspectives and seeks to discover what they are experiencing, and how they interpret their experiences. The procedure adopted in this study is to capture and express the participants' voices as authentically as possible, relating their words, and discerning their meanings as much as possible.

Explanation of Theory

The church leaders do not know why they do not allow women to be ordained as part of church ministers and leaders. There are a number of overlapping factors and all do not come out clear in their teaching. There is no clear direction known to the entire leadership group. Each has his own perception. It is not documented anywhere as a church doctrine. The most likely factor that affects women ordination, and which the leaders agreed upon unanimously without contradiction is the cultural factor. Other factors mentioned had contrasting perspectives but not the cultural factor.

Leaders Understanding of Women Ordination and Leadership

The two terms have been used by the leaders interchangeably. To them the two mean one and the same. When answering questions raised to them about ordination they end up explaining issues to do with leadership. This is done from time to time. Thus, in EAPC, when one is ordained, he/she is considered to be a leader in the system. Once one is ordained, he or she is allowed to lead both men and women at all levels of leadership. However women are also considered leaders in their own rights but only among women. This study has to do with ordination and administrative leadership, which women are not allowed participation.

Ordination of Women as Church Ministers and Leadership

Ordination in this study means, giving of authority, to do pastoral duties by the higher authority of the church administration. This allows them to take a leading role in decision making that affects the entire church congregation. From the findings, the ordination of women has been hindered by a number of factors that have interplayed in the life of the church. The findings have established that, cultural beliefs, ignorance

among the founding church leaders, and lack of Biblical theology to address the ordination of women have contributed to key factors leading into the practice.

All the participants in the study are mature Christians and long serving leaders in the church, they are versed with information from the inception of the church to date. All have served with the church for over twenty years in one capacity of church leadership or another. The names used in this study are not the actual names of respondents. I have chosen the names of the apostles of Jesus Christ to represent their actual names. The names chosen from among the apostles are: Peter, John, James, Andrew and Philip. The questions will be answered in conference format.

Reasons for EAPC not to Ordain Women as Ministers and Leaders

The answers to this question had a lot in common from all the respondents. They lamented that there has been a lot of ignorance among the founding members of the church. The missionary who brought the faith to them was a man who said that he relied on the Holy Spirit to guide him. He and the very first leaders of the church did not give a clear cut guideline on the role of women in the church. They neither opposed nor agreed to their ordination. All was left to chance.

The data also shows that the traditional factor played a big role in the practice. The African culture in which women are seen as the second class human beings had its part, and in fact a bigger portion than the rest of the contributing factors. Women in Tharaka were treated with little respect if any. They were not allowed to play any leading role in the society in whatever capacity. They had never been involved in active decision making or take any leading role where men were involved. The founding missionary wanting to please them and not be on the offensive compromised with the culture he found on the ground in order to get more and more members. Coupled with other reasons, was also the lack of theologically trained leaders.

The interpretation was done based on the cultural settings, and thus they brought in their worldview into the Bible which is common approach to all Bible interpretation in the world. From the preconceived ideas based on cultural understanding, they easily assumed the scriptures forbid women from all leadership roles.

Ignorance and Women Ordination

The following were responses from different leaders. They expressed the idea that the leaders who were in position did not have sufficient knowledge to handle such sensitive doctrinal issues. They blamed the founding missionary and the other founding members for lack of clear guidance on women participation in the church matters. His failure to provide guidance contributed immensely to the prevailing situation in the church to date. His footsteps were followed by the leaders that came in to work with him and the entire church members followed the suit. In this study the following sentiments were heard from the leaders:

Peter: One of the long serving and highly placed leaders in the church said:

No women have been ordained as pastors this far because the preceding leaders mainly the founders of the church did not know that the Bible never prohibited women from leading. They lacked knowledge. The past leaders understood the Bible to be teaching that ordination of women was wrong.

The other member of the team put the issue of ignorance in a more serious note when responding to the same question. He argued that the founder of the church did not consider women as human beings that would take church leadership. John puts his response this way:

The founder of the church did not consider women as beings that could be ordained and lead the church as pastors. The government today allows women to give their views regarding issues in the community.

It was also interesting to hear from James, the very founding member and retired officer in the church. He saw the church being founded and participated in the

team that registered the church in the country. He was the first person to be in charge of the church and the one who brought the Word of God among the Tharaka people.

He had this to say:

The founder of the church did not teach which way to go. He did not clarify whether women would be ordained to lead or not. However he allowed his wife to read some Scriptures from the Bible but he did not allow her to preach. She was allowed to give a personal life testimony and then took her seat. This was taken as norm and ideal standard in the church to be followed.

Although the Missionary did not teach by word what he believed was the right thing to do, the locals were very observant. His wife was not actively involved in priestly roles as the husband was. Thus, actions spoke louder than voice in this matter. Keeping silence meant that what he and his wife practiced was the ideal. So, the leaders went by that to date.

Bible Interpretation and Women Ordination

Each of the respondents was quick in giving this side of the problem even before the researcher raised a related question. They argued that there was misinterpretation of the Bible on the side of leaders. Some said that there was no Scripture barring the ordination of women. While others said that there is no provision for women ordination in the Bible. The founder member James had this to say:

There was no Scripture that was used to hinder women from being ordained. We read what was said on the day of Pentecost. He said that God will pour his Spirit upon all flesh. Women and men are allowed to preach and each has a promise of what they can do. Anna in the New Testament was a woman who stayed in the house of God. She was a prophetess and she must have been preaching. Thus we had no Scripture prohibiting women ordination at all.

James was referring to Luke 2:36-38 which states that:

There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty four. She never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

He continued to add that, what really matters is the support of the husbands for their wives in case they see a call in their lives. He contends that: “Again we are told that if women have a call to preach, they should share their burden with their husbands and let them know their desires. We should not deny them as their husbands an opportunity to serve. We should support them”.

Peter and John are in agreement with James but Philip and Andrew have a different opinion. Peter responding to the issue argues that:

But as for us today at the National Council (Almashauri) we have agreed that women should be allowed to go to Bible schools and thereafter be ordained to serve as pastors. We have agreed that there should not be any set boundaries for women service in the church. This is according to Joel chapter two prophesy that says that: “in the last days God will share his Spirit to men and women”. We have agreed at the national level that for this to happen, women should be allowed to go to Bible school. This has not taken place yet because our school lacks facilities to accommodate them.

John argues from the modern point of view that the secular governments are being open to allow women to serve in all capacities. He also supports his argument from the Biblical perspective and states that:

They should be allowed to lead. The bigger number of church members today is that of women. They should be allowed since this is the time when the Holy Spirit says that in the last days I will pour my Spirit upon all flesh. When the Spirit of God comes upon a person, whether a man or a woman, one should serve God in the ministry he calls the individuals. Today majority of Bible teachers and facilitators in church seminars are women. We should allow ours to learn from them and become teachers of the word of God.

According to him there is no passage of scripture, which hinders women from being ordained as church ministers. He says: “According to me there is no Scripture that denies women from speaking.” He referred to the book of Titus 2:3-5 which states that:

Likewise teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self

controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.”

Anyone teaching otherwise is heretical. I do believe that God can speak through a woman. On the same issue we see that Andrew and Philip are at loggerheads with these three and argue differently. This is a clear indication that what then happens at the top has not been communicated to the rest and they are not on one accord in this issue to date.

Philip says that: The Bible does not enlist any woman as an apostle. All the apostles of Jesus were men. Women are only seen to assist helping Jesus and Paul in serving them. Therefore this is the main reason why the church would not accept to ordain women.

Andrew: The Bible teaches that it is men who have been called to preach. We have no reference to women as preachers. The team that Jesus Christ had, of the twelve apostles was all men. No woman has ever been called to be an apostle. Women have a duty like that of Dorcas. Therefore in relation to the work that Dorcas did as recorded in the Bible, EAPC started a similar ministry in order to encourage women to emulate her deeds.

To summarize, it is over fifty years to date since the inception of the church. The church started in 1953, and the leaders do not have a common direction regarding this issue. This shows that even now the church has a lot to do in order to let her members know why women are not allowed to be ordained or to take any other leadership role in the church. If the leaders themselves have different opinions, it can then be concluded that even the members are in the same state. This agrees with what James says. He argued that:

The founder of the church did not teach which way to go. He did not clarify whether women would be ordained to lead or not. However he allowed his wife to read some Scriptures from the Bible but he did not allow her to preach.

She was allowed to give a personal life testimony and then took her seat. This was taken as norm and ideal standard in the church to be followed.

This is a clear indication that the church has lacked formulized theology for years and this call for urgent attention. Each has taken what he or she pleases, and the situation is like that of sheep without shepherd. This approach to leadership is called Laissez Faire. The leaders should stop criticizing the work of the founding missionary and other members and adopt a more positive and constructive approach to women's role in the church development. However it is true that the traditional way in which Christianity was introduced in Africa, has largely been responsible for the prevailing faith confusion in among the African Christians. This is a religious double mindedness, thus not being fully African or completely Christian.

Culture and Women Ordination

The study has revealed that cultural practices were rampant and it was not easy to break the barrier. This formed one of the strongest barriers in the failure to ordain women in the church as confessed by leaders and as we see in figure 4.1. The founder compromised with the situation and had nothing to do with it. The culture dictated issues. James puts it that:

There were also a lot cultural issues in Tharaka by then. People were not educated, and so were the women. Women were not allowed to go to school even when schools appeared. Girls were to be married and got to make their own homes. All these things held women from rendering any out door activities. Moreover, it was against culture for a woman to spend a night or so out of homestead. Tharaka people did not allow women to spend night away from home, in the name of education or anything else. A married woman would not go to school and leave her husband in the home. This was a bad picture to Tharaka community. There was no proper teaching on the need for a woman's need to go to school. Thus no woman felt the need to take up the challenge to lead or go to school. This belief was transferred into the church circles.

James further expressed that women had very little roles to play in the society because they were considered as beings who had no power to conceal any secret. He states:

Women were not allowed to sit in any dispute proceedings. Only men were involved in settling disputes. They were seen as just married wives and thus a property of a given clan and individual husband's property. Women were thought that they could not keep a secret. It was said that if they were made to know these secrets they would reveal them at difficult times if squeezed. Thus, there is a saying "Muka atiithaga njogu". This was a common metaphor used to express the idea. They were always to be shown the way and not to show others the way in terms of leadership.

Responding to the question whether culture had any role in this practice, Peter did not hesitate. He said:

When I was deeply thinking about the issue, I found that they were rooted on our culture. The culture gives women no place of leadership. Only men are supposed to be leaders. The past leaders said that they have never seen a woman leading men in history. They did not understand that leading a church is not like leading men. Culture highly pressed the leaders in their thinking and this was a problem.

Peter continued to narrate the cultural practices as major hindrance and said that, according to Tharaka culture, women were not allowed to lead anywhere. They could not preside over any dispute. If there were any issues in the family, in the absence of the husband, the woman would say that she would wait for the owner of the family to come. In the customary law, women were not allowed to take any leadership role in the family. They could not decide. This practice spread into the church leadership. The belief that women cannot lead was established in their thoughts and played a significant role in women's ordination issues. Wives would not make a sale of anything in the absence of the husband without his permission. They said they were women and would not dissect the head of a goat (Watuura kiongo). The meaning of the metaphor is that they did not have authority to make decisions. If they did, it was a failure to honor their husbands. The head was part of the animal meat that was set aside for husbands. This symbolized their authority as head of the household. If the problem persisted, in absence of the husband, the wife could call her male relatives like her brother-in-law to represent her husband in the matter. In case

of the head meat, a little boy in the home, a son would pretend to dissect the head. This was to show that the father has been represented and then the woman would go ahead to share the head meat with the children and others.

John also agrees with the traditional influence and categorically saw the role played by tradition. He states that:

Many used the term that a woman is never allowed to dissect a head. This meant that they are not allowed to lead. But in Christ it is different. In Galatians 3:28, all are equal in Christ. It does not give men leadership per se at the expense of women. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." During the ascension of Christ, it was women who knew of the resurrection first, they went to the tomb and reported the episode to the disciples. This shows that they were very close to God. Today in church, women are actively involved in singing ministry and other activities.

James:

Women were not allowed to sell properties like cows, goats, or even give another person a section of a farm to cultivate. They would not even sell crops in a store. If visitors came home in the absence of the husband, she had no mandate to slaughter a goat for them. Women were not allowed to eat some portions of meat from the slaughtered animal, such as lungs, liver, or pancreas. Since men were warriors, they were the ones allowed to eat these portions because they were considered more nutritious and they provided more strength to fight in defense of the community members. A woman would not eat or divide (dissect) a head of the animal.

James continued to argue that, if she did, this was interpreted to mean she has dissected her husband. In case the husband was not at home, the wife would take a panga and have a little boy hold it in position as though he is dissecting the head to represent the father and then the meat would be eaten. Just like the way people do with cake cutting in the modern weddings. Even in the case where a visitor comes home and the father has permitted a goat to be killed, the boy can still play the role of the father and preside over the slaughter.

Andrew:

Women's place was at home. They were not allowed to go out and leave the home where their duties were most needed. Women have always done work at home. Therefore to think of a woman as pastor has bad taste. They cannot

leave their husbands and travel long distances in the name of preaching. It is not good at all for women to be pastors. When asked whether women can go to Bible school, with hesitation he said yes. But women should only train in company of their husbands. This is because men fear that their wives can turn loose and be unfaithful to their husbands.

Philip:

Women are supposed to be at home and not to travel long distances and spend nights out of their homes. They can only do that in company of their husbands. Our culture does not permit women to leave their children at home and travel long distances. It was the traditional way that they stay at home and care for the children. When asked whether wives can go to Bible school, as before he said it is okay but they should go with their husbands in the same institution.

The Role Played by the Founding Missionary

Some of the leaders blamed the lack of direction to the founding missionary of the church. They said that he was not determined which way to lead the church. They tried to copy what they saw from his example set by his wife and thought that was the way acceptable for all women. In this study, this is foundational barriers to women ordination which contributed to failure to transmit knowledge as seen in figure 4.1 resulting to ignorance. The following are their sentiments regarding this:

Peter: From the time I started working with EAPC, I wondered why the white man did not take the initiative to teach us this truth. He relied on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He did not want to ask for advice. He went with the cultures of the people whenever he went planting churches. This was so in order to attract many people into his church denomination. His wife used to preach. She was the first church treasurer upon the registration of the church. She used to distribute money whenever it was needed to enable work to continue. His wife served the church in that role. Although he supported the idea that women should not lead, his own wife was a leader.

John: He had a wife who did not preach. She only gave a testimony probably she did not have the teaching talent. Asked why the founder allowed a women group called Dorcas to be formed; he said it was founded on the Biblical Dorcas. This group encouraged women to sing for God and to serve in the helping ministry. This played a role in discouraging women from becoming other leaders in the church.

The Role Played by Dorcas in Women's Ordination

From my observation as a church member and one of the leaders, I have known of a group in the church called Dorcas. There is a need to find out how Dorcas started and its purpose since it was meant to be for women only. In response the leaders gave a similar answer for the purposes.

Peter stated that: Dorcas is said to have been founded after the woman in the Bible called Dorcas. "In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor. ...All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them"(Acts 9:36, 40).

The church decided to have the women's group called Dorcas in order to teach them to emulate Dorcas of the Bible. Her work was to help others by works of her own hands. Thus, the objective of the church was to teach women how to help the church and others by working, besides being involved in spiritual matters. Later the name Dorcas was changed due to the arising secular women's groups. It is now called women's fellowship. According to my own thinking, this was real proof that women were not allowed to be ordained, but to help in this capacity. This too affected their service in the church and stopped them from becoming pastors. I do understand that God intended women to have a ministry in the church but the understanding of the leaders then was limited.

Commenting on the objectives and purposes of Dorcas, James asserted that:

Dorcas was a group for converted women in the church. They were to emulate Dorcas of the Bible. Help one another to raise their living standards. They were not hindered from preaching. However, they could not be allowed to become leaders or pastors, for this involved settling disputes and making decisions.

James responded that, Dorcas was founded on the Biblical Dorcas. He said that; there arose women groups that were secular and tended to attract women believers on their side. This resulted to the formation of Dorcas to hold the women in the church. The idle women needed a place to be identified with. Dorcas was a group meant to encourage women to sing in the church and also enable them to preach. Least did the leaders know this was a way of limiting women's role in the church, and consequently an barrier as seen in figure 4.1

Contribution by Ordained Women in Church

Those who are not opposed to the ordination of women have some reasons to give and the contribution they would bring to the church. This question was not directed to those who do not support women's ordination. James, full of enthusiasm, answered:

The only people who can strengthen the church today are ordained women. This is because; they have the ability to feed their families. They are not destructive with finances as men are. They can take care of the church the same way they care for their families. They can take care of the church treasury more than men do. Even in the government offices, women do better than men. The churches that have ordained ministers are okay so long as they follow the Biblical principles. They should get women who are in good terms with their husbands, and ensure that their husbands support their ministry.

John: If women are ordained as ministers today, truly I say that they can bring great change provided they are women who are obedient to the Word of God, submissive to their husbands and of good character.

Asked to comment on the churches that have ordained women as ministers, he said:

Women, who are ordained and keep to their husbands without wondering about calling themselves prophets, will bring tremendous growth into the church. Women, who move together with their husbands and people discover that she is united to her husband, will obviously bring revival to the church.

In response to the same question, Peter as one of the national leaders had a lot to say regarding the contribution that women would bring to the church if ordained.

Without any shadow of doubts in his response he said:

There would be awakening in minds of women. So, we have been ignorant for we too are shepherds of the body of Christ. The view that preaching is the work of men would change and that preaching is for all of us and all should do it. This will totally bring a revival in the church. This makes it to have a different picture apart from the cultural way of where men are the only ones allowed to do outdoor activities. All those called of God will participate in the building of the kingdom of God.

In Summary, from the study, three main factors have been identified to be the leader's perception and which acted as the core barriers to women ordination and leaders in EAPC. In this study we refer to them as tri-factors. The diagram on page 51 helps to have a holistic view of the factors associated with the practice of failure to allow women ordination. It has been revealed that, culture played a vital role which was aggravated by lack of the founding missionary and other local leaders to give direction regarding the issue. From the study, there is a clear indication that culture influenced and continues to influence in a lesser degree much of the church practices up to date. This is because all the respondents agreed unanimously that culture had a great role to play. There is no doubt that this was the main factor. Like in all other cultures, changes are always resisted. In fear of trending on a dangerous path the

church leaders shied off and did not want to touch those sensitive cultural practices. I do agree with what Diane B. Stinton says about culture and Christianity. She argues that:

The traditional African world should be taken seriously, it is within the traditional thought-forms and religious concerns that our peoples live and try to assimilate Christian teaching. Those traditional thought forms strongly color much of their understanding of the Christian message, ...the living experience of the church is an important source of theological reflection. (Stinton 2004, 38).

In my observation as a member of the church denomination, it is true that, much of the practices against women ordination is based on the traditional beliefs of the community. Not only in the area of women ordination but also in other practices that are adversely affected by traditions and thus leading to syncretism.

The members were left to guess what to do. Having much more knowledge on the place of women from the cultural perspective, it was easier for them to be attracted to move towards the direction that favors them as Stinton implies in her view cited above. This is reflected even among the leaders themselves who have tended to give diversified views concerning this very important doctrinal issue. The third factor is the interpretation of scriptures by leaders on lone range level. A few of the respondent argued that the scripture does not provide any place for women in the ministry as ordained workers, but as helpers.

Thus the creation of a ministry for women called Dorcas, to encourage them to emulate Dorcas of the Bible whose role was to help others. The figure gives a detailed explanation of the phenomenon. On the other had , those who see the value that would be played by ordained women, do not see any Biblical hindrance to the practice as opposed to those who argue that Christ did not have them as apostles. In contrast, they gave scriptures that support their bind for ordination.

The diagram below shows how the three factors adversely contribute towards the ordination of women and leadership in EAPC. The diagram shows how the attempt to ordain women has been sand witched between three strong barriers.

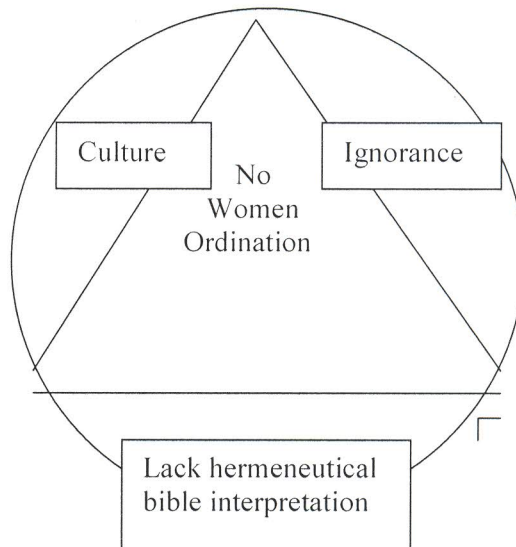


Fig.4.1 Three reasons that hinder women ordination in EAPC

Cultural practices demanded that:

- Women cannot conceal a secret
- Their place is at home
- Are not allowed to make decision
- Are not allowed to lead men

Ignorance was aggregated by:

- Founding missionary failed to give direction
- Founding local leaders did not have theological education
- Compromise by the leaders on the cultural issues

Lack of hermeneutical Biblical interpretation led to misplacement of women's role.

- They had to play the helping role
- No woman among the apostles of Jesus Christ
- Dorcas played vital role in discouraging women to do other ministries but helping.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When the analysis was over and interpretation was done, based on collected data, the researcher made conclusions and recommendations as indicated here below.

Need for Ordination of Women

Most respondents see the importance of women ordination into church ministry. They have supported their arguments by giving bible references and also comparing the same with what they see happening in other churches surrounding them that have allowed women ordination. In his support for the need for women ordination, John gives an example of Deborah as one of the very prominent women who was used of God to deliver her people despite the fact that there were men in Israel at the time. She carried out the duty of dealing with disputes a task many think that women cannot be able to handle. He states that:

Once there lived a woman by the name Deborah. Israel was oppressed by neighboring tribes for many years. It is Deborah a woman who fought for Israel. There are many churches where there are no men who are upright to take church leadership, while there are women who are righteous in the same congregation. Such women should be allowed to lead. The church must not be allowed to fail when there are capable women who assist in the church services.

John was referring to the passage of scripture in Judges which says in part: “Deborah a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. She held court under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites came to her to have their disputes decided” (4: 4-5).

He said that women who have been seen in the area working among the Methodist church are doing a tremendous job. Peter in his support for women ordination states: “As I said earlier concerning Joel’s prophesy, the churches that ordain women are not wrong. Being a man or woman makes no difference. There will be no woman or man in heaven.”

Sensitizing Women into Ordination

Women should be made to understand that they have all rights to serve God on equal basis with men. Peter says that:

Women should be taught that they have the freedom to talk. Deborah was a woman leader. If she had no freedom of expression, she could not lead men during her time. If we teach our wives freedom of speech, they will also be free to listen from God and thus, strengthen the body of Christ.

Peter went on to explain that currently he has made plans to sensitize women in his region on these matters. He said:

I have plans with women co-coordinator to teach women their rights. We have agreed to start with seminars. It is through seminars that we will bring women from different parishes. We have said that Miriam who was Aaron’s sister, after crossing Jordan by mighty hand of God, she became the first lady to lead women in praise of God for the victory God gave them. If God had not empowered this woman, she could not have led others.

He was referring to Exodus 15:20-21 which states: “Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron’s sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing. Miriam sang to them: sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea.”

Allow Women to go to Bible School for Training

Training of women in theological studies will enable them to understand their role in the church ministry better other than continue training of men alone. However, there are attached conditions to this requirement from most of the respondents.

Peter, John and James recommend that women with a call to serve should be allowed entry to Bible schools. This will change their attitude towards themselves. However, they recommend that, such women should be accompanied by their husbands. James says:

If women are to go to Bible school, their husbands should be with them. The reason is that they may find men in the school who are not truly saved but wearing the skin of a wolf and these men may seduce them into sexual immorality. This act would finally kill their ministry and their family as well.

Philip was also for the same idea although his opinion was that women have no place in ordination. He said: "If women are to be taken to a Bible school, then their husbands should join them". The reason is based on the false generalization that women are weak and can easily be pushed into what is wrong by men. This misconception is driven from the traditional belief that women are weak. I do propose that in order to bring the cultural issues to its real place in comparison to the Bible, there needs to be a tailor made Bible training for Tharaka pastors. And in order for this to take place, a local Bible school should be established geared towards handling among others cultural issues. I am aware that, even other communities where EAPC has churches do not have women in leadership, but as an observer, Tharaka needs a special attention.

Allow Wider Exposure

Women should be allowed to attend many church functions outside their familiar settings. They should be allowed to attend seminars and Christians functions where other women from other churches are facilitating. They should be provided

with an opportunity to interact with ordained women ministers from other churches. Such women should be invited to teach in the local churches.

Concerning this John says: There should be seminars to enlighten women on their rights. Moreover, involve other women in teaching them. Women who have “Kathari” (women with good reputation). Kathari was a piece of clothe that was worn by Tharaka women especially married ones to cover their breasts, which was a symbol of maturity and good reputation, John explained.

Recommendations for Further Study

The study reveals that the church does not have any one universal understanding and Biblical stand on the issue of women ordination. Thus, her members must be more confused than the leaders. They are in darkness and each chooses what to believe. This is reflected in the contradictory statements issued by the leaders who responded to the study. In light of these findings, the following suggestions for further study have been made:

1. Further investigation could be done to find out women’s stand on ordination.
2. The study advices the church leaders to come up with a clear stand that will be embraced by all her members, other than leave them to choose what they like on their own. The leaders should be able to build their theological formulation on African religious heritage and show the distinction that exists between Christianity and cultural practices. This, in a way will help other leaders with differing opinions to understand. This in turn will check out schism in the church.

3. A further study involving the National leaders needs to be undertaken in order to have their own perception since there is no clear guide concerning the issue on study.

REFERENCE LIST

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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Thank you for your willingness to answer these questions. I do wish to promise you that the answers you have given will be made confidential.

1. What does the Bible say about women ordination?
2. How many women do you know who have been ordained as pastors in EAPC?
3. How do cultural beliefs influence women ordination?
4. Do you train any women at your Bible institute? Give reasons for your answer?
5. What do have to say about churches that have ordained women as ministers?
6. Can women training and ordination improve the church growth in any way?

APPENDIX B
TIME LINE AND BUDGET

Time line

Activity	Month
a) Develop instrument for the field	June 2005
b) Pilot testing	July 2005
c) Refining instruments or design	Aug 2005
d) Actual field study	Aug 2005
e) Data analysis	February
2006	
f) Write up	March
2005	
g) First and second reader	March-
April	
h) Submission for external reader	May 12 th
2006	
i) Proposal approval at DVCAA office	June 9 th
2006	
Presentation for final exam	June 28 th
2006	
Budget	
Items	cost (Ksh)
Transport to field and back	2,000

Typing costs	1,000
Photocopying	6,000
Contingent	1,500
Total	10,500